

Jazz, Hip Hop, and African Connections

MUH 4935/6930

Spring 2022

**Course Time:** Thursdays 4:05-7:05 pm

**Professor:** Sarah Politz (spolitz@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 4-5 pm, by appointment

**Course Description:** This course will consider how African music and culture have influenced African American musical expression since the beginning of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and up through the development of the blues, jazz, soul music, hip hop, and r&b. We will consider how such cultural flows have moved in both directions, from the foundations of African American music in African aesthetics of orality, performance, and embodiment, to the ways that jazz and hip hop musicians have throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century made explicit reference or taken inspiration from African musical cultures. Assignments will include short response posts, analysis of music videos and other media, and a final research paper. Previous experience in music, African studies, or African American studies is desirable but not required.

**Course Objectives:** Students will (1) demonstrate familiarity with the literature, scholarship, and central themes of African American popular music with reference to Africa, and (2) be able to identify and think critically about the signs and sounds of Africa in African American popular music.

**Course Pre-requisites:** This course is intended primarily for graduate and undergraduate students in music. Non-music students may enroll with the permission of the professor.

**Grading:** All assignments will be graded as a percentage out of 100, and included in the final grade according to the following proportions:

Weekly response papers 25%, Music video analysis 15%, Scholarly review article 10%, Final paper and presentation 30%, attendance 10%, participation 10%

### **Description of Course Assignments**

**Weekly Response Papers:** Read the assigned articles and any listening/viewing assignments and write a response post of about 250 words, to be posted to the course website by midnight on the day before class. You may provide a critical response to one or more of the readings, place two or more readings in conversation with one another, or compare an aspect of the readings to your own research, listening, or performance experience.

**Scholarly Article Review:** Select a scholarly article not assigned on the syllabus and write a short (1-2 pages double spaced) review of the article, evaluating its strengths and any areas of productive critique. **Due week 7.**

**Music Video Analysis:** Select a song from an African American popular music style and an accompanying video with African imagery and/or references in the lyrics. This will be a song released in the last 20 years of your own choosing. Give a 10-minute presentation on your analysis and write a short paper (about 5 pages, double spaced) evaluating the lyrical content and imagery in the video, and placing it in historical and cultural context. The paper will be evaluated based on the argument and the evidence presented. **Due week 12.**

**Final Paper:** A final paper (10 pages, double spaced) is due by **Friday, April 21** at 5 pm posted to Canvas. This paper should be focused on a topic discussed or related to topics discussed in class pertaining to African American musical expression in international or cross-cultural perspective. This paper should be formatted following Chicago style and citation guidelines. The proposal for this paper is due before class in week 11. The paper will be evaluated on its groundedness in specific music and video examples, the quality of the research, and the strength of the argument and the evidence.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class during the semester. If you are absent without an approved excuse for more than two class sessions during the semester, each class (beginning with the third) will result in a two-percentage-point deduction in your attendance grade for the class.

**Discussion Participation Rubric**

	<b>High Quality</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<b>Informed</b>	Shows evidence of having done the assigned work. Contributions are grounded in assigned readings and listenings.	Shows some evidence of having done the assigned work. Contributions are not consistently grounded in assigned readings and listenings.	No evidence of having done the assigned work. No contributions or contributions are not grounded in the assigned readings and listenings.
<b>Thoughtful</b>	Shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised. Contributions synthesize connections and formulate critical questions.	Shows some evidence of having understood and considered issues raised. Connections are not consistently synthesized; critical questions are not consistently raised.	Little to no evidence of having understood and considered issues raised. Synthesis and questioning are largely absent.
<b>Considerate</b>	Takes the perspective of others into account. Contributions situate the participant's perspective	Takes some perspectives of others into account. Contributions occur but are not consistent in	Does not take the perspective of others into account.

	in relation to others and demonstrate the ability to consider multiple points of view simultaneously.	regards to perspective, positioning, or the ability to consider multiple points of view.	
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## Grading Scale

A	94.00-100.00% of possible points		C	74.00-76.99%
A-	90.00-93.99%		C-	70.00-73.99%
B+	87.00-89.00%		D+	67.00-69.99%
B	84.00-86.99%		D	64.00-66.99%
B-	80.00-83.99%		D-	60.00-63.99%
C+	77.00-79.99%		E	< 60.00%

## Outline of Class Content

(subject to change)

Week 1 – Course introduction

Week 2 – Africa in the Study of Black American Music

Ramsey, Guthrie P., Jr. 2003. “Disciplining Black Music: On History, Memory and Contemporary Theories,” and in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*. 17-43.

Jones, LeRoi. 1963. *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*, introduction and chapter 1. (appx. 10 pages)

Floyd, Samuel. 1995. Chapter 1, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*. 3-34.

Week 3 – New Orleans Music and Africa

Lipsitz, George. 2011. “New Orleans in the World and the World in New Orleans,” *Black Music Research Journal* 31(2):261-290.

Evans, Freddi Williams. 2011. “Foreword” (J.H.K. Nketia), “Introduction,” “The Legacy of the Gathering Place,” “The Significance of the Gatherings,” and “The Gatherers” in *Congo Square: African Roots in New Orleans*. pp. ix-xii, 1-22, 23-46, 47-61.

See playlist (Jelly Roll Morton, Professor Longhair, James Booker, Dr. John, Wild Magnolias, Dirty Dozen, Rebirth Brass Band)

Week 4 – The Afro-Centric Idea

Nketia, J.H. Kwabena. 2005. “African Roots of Music in the Americas: An African View,” in *Ethnomusicology and African Music*. pp. 318-336.

Asante, Molefi. 1990. “Dancing Between Circles and Lines,” in *The Afro-centric Idea*. 1-23.

Austin, Algernon. 2006. "The Racial Ideology of Afrocentrism," in *Achieving Blackness: Race, Black Nationalism and Afrocentrism in the Twentieth Century*. 110-129.

Week 5 – Jazz and Africa 1930-1960: Blues, Swing, Bebop

Jackson, Travis. 2003. "Jazz Performance as Ritual: The Blues Aesthetic and the African Diaspora," in *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*, ed. Ingrid Monson. pp. 21-82

Woideck, Carl. 2017. "Authentic Synthetic Hybrid: Ellington's Concepts of Africa and Its Music," in *Duke Ellington Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 224-264.

Lock, Graham. 1999. "Duke Ellington: Tone Parallels," in *Blutopia: Visions of the Future and Revisions of the Past*. pp. 77-118

Ramsey. 2003. "We Called Ourselves Modern: Race Music and the Politics and Practice of Modernism at Midcentury" in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*. 96-130.  
See playlist (Ellington, *Black Brown & Beige*)

Week 6 – African Jazz, Latin Jazz (Guest Yosvany Terry)

Kelley, Robin. 2012. "Prelude," and "The Drum Wars of Guy Warren," *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*. 1-40.

Austerlitz, Paul. 2005. "Machito and Mario Bauza," in *Jazz Consciousness* (42-97)

Monson, Ingrid. 1999. "Art Blakey's African Diaspora," in *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*, 324-347.

See playlist (Dizzy Gillespie, Arturo Sandoval, Machito, Mario Bauza, Art Blakey, Bud Powell, E.T. Mensah, Guy Warren)

Week 7 – Jazz and Africa During the Civil Rights Era: Free Jazz, Hard Bop

\*Scholarly article review due

Weinstein, Norman. 1993. "John Coltrane: Sounding the African Cry for Paradise," and "Randy Weston: Talking Piano Like a Drum Shouting Freedom," in *A Night in Tunisia: Imaginings of Africa in Jazz* (60-72, 107-118)

Kelley. 2012. "The Sojourns of Randy Weston," in *Africa Speaks, America Answers*. 41-90.

Thomas, Lorenzo. 1995. "Ascension: Music and the Black Arts Movement," in *Jazz Among the Discourses*. 256-274.

See playlist (Randy Weston, *African Cookbook* (1964); John Coltrane, *Africa/Brass* (1961))

Week 8 – Soul and Funk (Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, Motown, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, Black Power, George Clinton, Afro-futurism) – Guest Dr. Portia Maultsby

Ward, Brian. 1998. "Tell It Like It Is: Soul, Funk, and Sexual Politics in the Black Power Era," in *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations*. pp. 339-387.

Maultsby, Portia. 2015. "Soul" and "Funk" in *African American Music: An Introduction*. 277-319.

Womack, Ytasha. 2013. *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture*, ch. 4, "Mothership in the Key of Mars," 53-76.

See playlist (George Clinton, James Brown, Sun Ra (*Space is the Place*), Lee Scratch Perry)

Week 9 – The Birth of Hip Hop: Connecting to Africa Via Jamaica in the Bronx

Rose, Tricia. 1994. "Prophets of Rage: Rap Music and the Politics of Cultural Expression" in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. 99-145.

Chang, Jeff, and D. J. Kool Herc. 2007. *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*. Chapter 2: "Jamaica's Roots Generation and the Cultural Turn," 21-39

Decker, Jeffrey Louis. 1993. "The State of Rap: Time and Place in Hip Hop Nationalism," *Social Text*, 34:53-84.

Perchard, Tom. 2011. "Hip Hop Samples Jazz: Dynamics of Cultural Memory and Musical Tradition in the African American 1990s," *American Music*, 29(3):277-306.

See playlist (Gil-Scott Heron, Afrika Bambaata, DJ Kool Herc, A Tribe Called Quest, Gangstar, Guru, Native Tongues, Queen Latifah, De La Soul, Black Sheep, Jungle Brothers, Digging in the Crates, Beat Miners, Helter Skelter, Smith and Wesson, Arrested Development, The Roots, Kamasi Washington, Nas, Miles Davis, Digable Planets, Last Poets, Erykah Badu)

\*Spring Break\*

Week 10 – Afro-centric Hip Hop, Religion, and Spirituality

\*Choose music video for analysis presentation due in Week 12

Ramsey, Guthrie. 2003. "Hip-Hop Hybridity and the Black Church Muse," in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*, 190-215.

Nesbit, Thomas. 2005. "Planet Rock: Black Socioreligious Movements and Early 1980s Electro" in *Call Me the Seeker: Listening to Religion in Popular Music*. 226-238.

Gosa, Travis. 2015. "The Fifth Element – Knowledge" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hip Hop*. 56-70.

See playlist (Afrika Bambaata, Kirk Franklin, Kanye West)

Week 11 – Afro-centric Hip Hop, Gender, and Sexuality

\*Final paper abstracts due

Mosley, Imani. 2020. "Say Her Name: Invocation, Remembrance, and Gendered Trauma in Black Lives Matter," in *Performing Commemoration: Musical Reenactment and the Politics of Trauma*, 142-161.

Williams, Faith. 2017. "Afrocentrism, Hip Hop, and the 'Black Queen': Utilizing Hip Hop Feminist Methods to Challenge Controlling Images of Black Women," *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, 10(1):211-223.

Neal, Mark Anthony. 2003. "Revolutionary Mixtape," in *Songs in the Key of Black Life: A Rhythm and Blues Nation*, 9-21.

Nyongo, Tavia. 2013. "Queer Hip Hop and Its Dark Precursors," *Palimpsest*, 2(2):144-146.

See playlist (Janelle Monae, Meshell Ndegeocello)

Week 12

\*Music video analysis presentations

Week 13 – Hip Hop, Social Change, and African Identity

\*Option to submit a draft of the final paper to Dr. Politz for review

Forman, Murray. 2010. "Conscious Hip-Hop, Change, and the Obama Era," *American Studies Journal*, 54. <http://www.asjournal.org/54-2010/conscious-hip-hop/>

Faraji, Salim. 2016. "Kendrick Lamar's Grammy Performance Points to a Simple Truth: #Black Lives Matter When Africa Matters," *Africology: The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 9(2):3-6. Listening: Kendrick Lamar (To Pimp a Butterfly)

\*Final papers due Friday, April 21 by 5 pm on Canvas

### **Class Policies**

Please do not multitask during class, become distracted by your phone or other devices, browse the web, etc. You should arrive on time, and notify Dr. Politz if you need to be absent, late, or leave early.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

For UF grading policies, including grades and grade points, please see here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.).

### **Academic Resources:**

Technical support (including Zoom and internet trouble), [helpdesk.ufl.edu](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu), 352-392-4357

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.  
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.  
<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.  
<https://career.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Office of Graduate Professional Development. Workshops and career advising on job searches, writing and research, personal and professional development for graduate students.  
<http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/about-us/offices/division-of-graduate-student-affairs-dgsa/professional-development-ogpd/>

E-learning technical support (for Canvas), 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

### **Wellness Resources:**

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.